SPRING
2012
VOL. 91

DEATH
VALLEY
'49ERS INC.

The Death Valley News

Fun Snapshots of the November 2011 Encampment. Furnace Creek was hoppin' with fun for all!

Golfers at Furnace Creek:

Dick Conn, Ron Midlikoski, Dennis Harders, Dick Gering, and Bill Pool.

***Death Valley Cabins* authors meet at the Historic Furnace Creek Inn**

Marv Jensen, Doug "Digger" Shearer, President Jim Graves, Mike Donoho, Dave Blacker, Jean Pickard, and Stan Paher.

Three generations of the Rochte family, in pioneer costumes, enjoy the Parade and the music of Belinda Gail and Mary Kay.

Chaparral sing to the wagons as they pass.

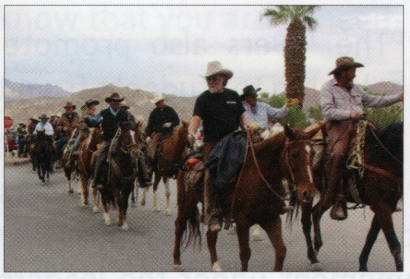
Invitational Western Art Show

Wade Family Descendents travel with the Wagon Train

Belinda Gail

Mary Kay

Southwest Vendors Show



Horse Riders at Furnace Creek

PHOTOS COURTESY MARV JENSEN

President's Perspective

Bev Malley, President 2012

It is a real pleasure and a great honor to serve as President of the Death Valley '49ers for 2012. My thanks to all whom have placed their confidence in me, as many dedicated Presidents have preceded me, honorably, preserving the appreciation and history of Death Valley.

In this our 63rd year we continue to support the National Park Service, the Death Valley Natural History association, as well as the National Park Service Educational Programs.

The Death Valley R.O.C.K.S. program (Recreation Outdoors Campaign for Kids through Study) provides Los Angeles and Las Vegas area children the opportunity to learn about camping and Death Valley. The '49ers support this educational opportunity for the youth. So far this year the '49ers have donated $6,556.00 to this project. The Quilt Raffle at the Encampment also supports this project donating over $2,000.00 this past Encampment.

The '49ers also promote an educational scholarship to students from the area that are in pursuit of higher education.

Your continued memberships and donations make this all possible. This past Encampment under the leadership of President Jim Graves was a huge success with many changes having to take place.

A special thank you goes to our numerous committees, as it is they who make it possible to stage all the many programs. We also thank and appreciate all of the help and support of Xanterra/Furnace Creek Ranch. Without our Visitor Center, Xanterra came to our rescue in so many ways. Many thanks also to the National Park Service for their support and cooperation.

I first came to the Encampment in 2001, encouraged by a life long friend, Lynn Fry, who came every year till he was 100 years old. I never missed an Encampment since that first experience. I was totally caught up on the event and these hard working '49ers, that made this all happen. I wanted to contribute and get involved. So here I am!

I was born and raised in Burbank, California and raised my three children in the San Fernando Valley, with my late husband Bob Malley. Bob was a dedicated '49er and a Director with the '49ers when he passed away in 2005.

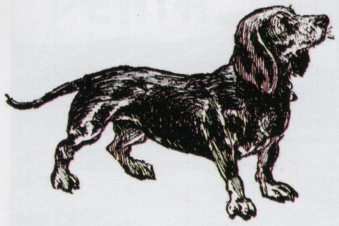
I had the fortune of a wonderful friendship with Marvin Jensen. In 2007 he served as the Death Valley '49ers President and I became the Membership Sales chairman. We shared many common interests as well as the Death Valley '49ers. We were happily married in 2010 and continue our dedication and love for the organization and this special place called Death Valley.

We are all looking forward to this years Encampment November 7th to 11th. Plans are already well underway. Your membership and support are what keeps this special event going 63 years strong! You are invited to become an active '49er. Let us hear your suggestions.

E-mail me anytime at:

chardlady@hotmail.com.

START PLANNING NOW!



It is never too early to start planning and making a costume for YOUR PET. During the 2011 Encampment we had 21 Pets all dressed in exciting and cute costumes in our Pampered Pet Parade which is now being held on the grass area at Furnace Creek. There were also many others that the MC - Ted Tatro invited to parade without costume.

So start planning and putting together a costume for your Pet. Our Pets always seem to know that "they are on Parade" and do their very best to please their owners and all those in the audience. Come join in the fun!!!!! Letha Tatro, Chairman Pampered Pet Parade.

Contestants at the Pampered Pet Parade strut their stuff.

Everyone looks skyward at a jet refueling above the Valley.

Need Cheering Up?

Letha Tatro - Chairman Hospitality Cards,

If you need a little extra cheering up for whatever reason - let me know.

I have many different types of cards to send out BUT I need to know that you are in need.

You can let me know by Email (tatros@volcano.net - after March 15th) OR by phone at 209-296-1601. After March 15th leave a message if NO ANSWER.

Make sure to tell me your address so the "Cheery Card" gets to you.

I hope everyone is well!

Visitor Center Reopens to the Public!

By Cheryl Chipman, NPS

The Visitor Center is open! Despite some minor delays from an optimistic December opening, the Visitor Center reopened on February 16th with nary a hitch. The park's new film "Seeing Death Valley" premiered the same morning to the delight of park visitors. One viewer actually said she needed a Kleenex to wipe her eyes it was so moving.

The Death Valley '49ers were integral in the original construction of the Visitor Center in 1960. The inscription on the building reads "Death Valley Museum 1960 Initiated by Death Valley '49ers Built upon Land donated by Borax (Holdings) Limited... And the rest is history.

Originally scheduled to be finished in June of this year, the early opening was a gift to all who had been staffing the temporary Visitor Center for the 14 months of rehabilitation. The Death Valley Natural History Association breathed a sigh of relief when the first visitors entered the front door. They have an expanded display and sales area with new products, including specialty Death Valley NP refillable stainless steel water bottles.

Because of the early opening, the new interactive exhibits are not yet complete, but will be installed in June as originally scheduled. They will highlight Death Valley extremes relating to climate, geology, animal and plant adaptations, and early inhabitants, and also feature topics such as the park's Dark Sky resource, the Timbisha Shoshone, mining and minerals.

A beautiful setting to relax at the Visitor Center.

The new back patio has shaded seating areas.

Join us for the Grand Opening Nov. 3-4, 2012!

The Park Service is planning a grand opening celebration for November 3-4th when the weather is more conducive to an outdoor gathering. The event will offer special tours, speakers, highlight the energy efficient features of the new building, including the new solar panels installed on parking shade structures in the parking lot. This is also the weekend of Shoshone Days, so additional activities will be available to visitors in the region. More information will be available as the event takes shape. Mark your calendars and head to Death Valley for the festivities!

A Brief History of the DEATH VALLEY AIRPORT

By Marvin Jensen, Life Director

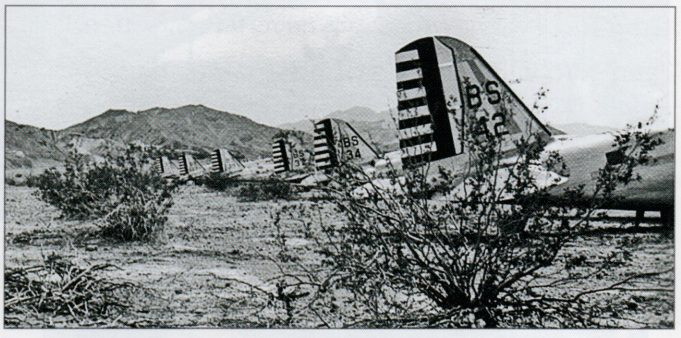
Most of you are aware that there is an airport near Furnace Creek Ranch and the Visitor Center. But how many of you know that when you park your motorhome or trailer at the Sunset Campground you are actually parking on the original Death Valley Airport that was constructed in 1926.

In 1926, the Pacific Borax Co. graded an airport where Sunset Campground exists today. The airport consisted of two runways. One runway ran north and south and 3,700 feet long by 200 feet wide. The other was a taxiway running northwest to southeast and 2,180 feet long by 125 feet wide. It also included a hanger, parking area for planes and a fueling station on the west side of Highway 190. This required planes to cross Highway 190 for parking and fueling. The airport was seen as an asset for the soon to open Furnace Creek Inn, as it provided another method of transportation to Death Valley.

Curtis Wright Air Service brings visitors to Death Valley during the 1930's. Photo courtesy Frasher Foto Postcard Collection.

Starting in 1933, the boys serving in the Civilian Conservation Corp. (CCC's) were flown into Death Valley by the Army Air Corp. from March Field, Riverside County, California. At the time, the famous Air Force General "Hap" Arnold was the colonel in charge of that air base. He was also in charge of the CCC's California Corp. 2. In the mid to late 1930's, the Army Air Corp used the Death Valley Airport for landings and take offs. Starting in 1939 till the end of World War II, both the Army and Navy Air Forces used the airfield for practice and training. Many types of aircraft landed at Death Valley but the B-18 Bomber was one of the more interesting.

B-18 bomber at Death Valley.



Six B-18's line up at Death Valley. Photos courtesy NPS.

After Death Valley became a National Park, there was a lot of discussion as to whether the airport was on public or land owned by the Borax Co. It turned out that most of the land was public land, owned by the Department of the Interior. This brought about the discussions if there should be an airport within National Park Service lands. There were also discussions about whether the airfield should even be kept open. About 1950 plans started to be made for an airport on the west side of Highway 190. The only problem was that the land was owned by the Pacific Borax Co. The Borax Co. gave 189 acres for a new airport in exchange for perpetual rights-of-way. In 1953 the new airport was constructed by the Civil Aeronautics Commission for $125,000.00. The new airport was completed in April of 1953 and the CAC operated the airport until 1956 when the National Park Service took responsibility.

continued on next page...

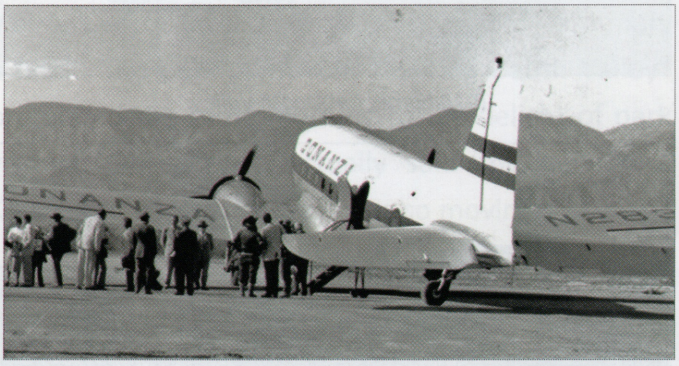
Airport Dedication

The Twenty Mule Team took part in the dedication.

The DC-3 belonged to Bonanza Airlines who had scheduled service to Death Valley.

Photo courtesy National Park Service

Bonanza continued service till the late 1950's when the runway was declared unsafe for planes like the DC-3. From that time on the airport is only for light aircraft. Today the airport is maintained by the National Park Service but only minimum maintenance is done just to keep it safe.



Bonanza DC-3 waiting to take on passengers. Photo courtesy National Park Service .

The Airport Today

The airport continues to be used by private planes and the numbers of landings can vary each month.

2012 – Private planes enjoy the use of Death Valley Airport. Photo by Marvin Jensen.

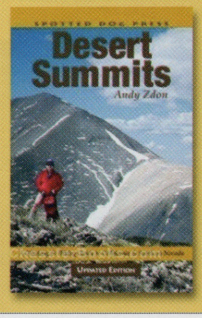
Do You Know The Answer?

The following information came to this writer's attention by someone who grew up in Death Valley during the 1930's. Can you help by providing information on the following: During the period of the CCC's in Death Valley, then Col. Hap Arnold had an additional airstrip graded on the west side opposite the road to Cow Creek. The purpose was to land the CCC boys closer to their base at Cow Creek, now the maintenance area. There seems to be no record.

If you know anything about this please e-mail the '49ers at: news_magazine@deathvalley49ers.org..
-Marv Jenson

Desert Summits

by geologist Andy Zdon



"It is a fantastic guide!"
George Wuerthner

Published by Spotted Dog Press.com

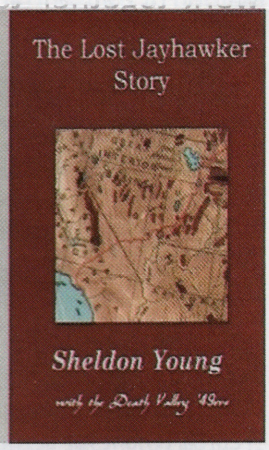
Sewing by Nancy

Nancy Lee Graves
(619) 449-2896
550 Tuttle Lane
El Cajon, CA 92021

Relive the true story of the Jayhawkers of Death Valley.

Written from the 1849 diary of Sheldon Young by a member of the Death Valley '49ers.

Indian River Publishing, 2010
ISBN: 978-0-692-01109-6
To Order: $14.95
irpublishing@hotmail.com



Interested in advertising in the next Death Valley '49ers Newsletter?

For more information please contact Heidi Rochte at ranger49er@gmail.com

The Death Valley '49ers Officers 2012

President: *Bev Malley*

1st Vice President: *Letha Tatro*

2nd Vice President: *Robert Whipple*

Secretary: *Nan Gering*

Treasurer: *Lou Martin*

The Death Valley '49ers consists of a board of 49 directors backed by a membership of volunteers called "advisors." These groups work together to produce the Encampment and serve the park in various ways. Consider joining us in our stated purpose: "..to expand public awareness of Death Valley as a highly valued national resource . . . to be protected and preserved . . . for future generations." That's our job. Come help us do it. *—ed*

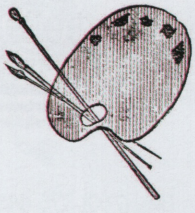
Photos courtesy of Marv Jenson

2011 President Jim Graves passes the gavel to Bev Malley.

Everyone is welcome to join us at the general meeting held the last day of the Encampment.

2012 President Bev Malley.

63rd Annual Death Valley '49ers Encampment



& Invitational Western Art Show

November 7-11, 2012

RESERVE YOUR SPACE NOW!!

www.nps.gov/deva/planyourvisit/camping-reservations.htm

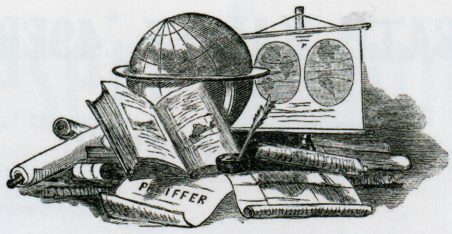
Furnace Creek Ranch at 800-236-7916 ~ Stovepipe Wells Resort at 760-786-2388

QUILT RAFFLE AGAIN BENEFITS THE R.O.C.K.S. PROGRAM

The 2011 Raffle Quilt brought in a record $2,088 to support the NPS Death Valley R.O.C.K.S. program. Marilyn Bracken of Independence was the lucky winner. Maureen Henry, who donated 15 historic squares for the quilt, drew the winning ticket on the last night of the Encampment. A big thank you goes to everyone who helped make the quilt, sold tickets or bought a raffle ticket. Stay tuned for another opportunity to win, as the 2012 Quilt will again support the R.O.C.K.S. program and will honor the many musicians who perform at our Encampments. Volunteers are needed to sell tickets during the Encampment. For more information please contact:

Virginia Stockman: rvstockman@aol.com 760-878-2337
Nan Gering: nangering@yahoo.com 760-561-5207

2011 Quilt Raffle winner Marilyn Bracken.



2012 SCHOLARSHIP AWARDED

The recipient of the 2012 Death Valley '49ers Scholarship is **Teresa Gomez of Beatty, Nevada**. Teresa plans to attend the Pima Medical Institute in Las Vegas and pursue a career in Radiology. She will receive up to $4,000 annually while attending an accredited college or trade school. Individual donations totaling $150 were received for the scholarship endowment fund this year.

For additional information about the scholarship or to make a donation or bequest to the endowment fund contact Virginia Stockman or Nan Gering at :

rvstockman@aol.com 760-878-2337
nangering@yahoo.com 760-561-5207
...or visit our website at:

deathvalley49ers.org/aboutus_scholarship.htm

HIGH SIERRA
AUTO & TRUCK REPAIR
Family Owned & Operated For Over 25 Years
Rusty & Tina Warren
Owners
760 375-4123
501 W. Ridgecrest Blvd. Ridgecrest CA 93555

St. Clair AUTOMOTIVE, INC.
"DON'T CUSS, CALL US"
24 HOUR TOWING
Roadside Assistance Provider
CHET ST. CLAIR
PRESIDENT (OWNER)
Bus: (760) 375-4456
Res: (760) 375-4253
111 S. Norma St.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

Remember the DV '49ers in Your Will

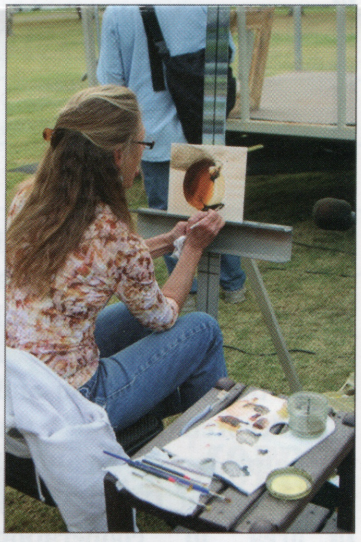
You can make charitable gifts through a will, trust, or beneficiary designation to the Death Valley '49ers. Gifts may be general or have specific designation to the Death Valley '49ers General Fund, Scholarship Endowment Fund or NPS Education Programs. Our federal identification number is 23-7087095. Contact your estate planner about setting up a personal legacy that will carry immeasurable good into the future.

***Thank You** to all of the talented Volunteers, Entertainers, Artists, Wagon drivers, and County & Park Employees who helped to make the 2011 Encampment a success!*

Chaparral entertain at the Sunday Morning Sing.

Photos courtesy of Marv Jenson

MC Richard Elloyan.



One of our artists hard at work.

Wagon Master Norm Noftsier & Mary Jo Steele.

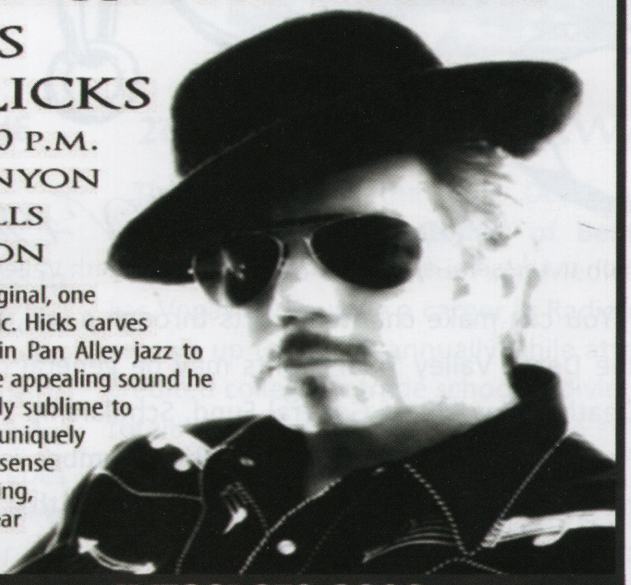
Mono County sheriff's Department mounted patrol taking part in the parade.

Dinner and Concert in the Rocks

THE BEVERLY AND JIM ROGERS MUSEUM
OF LONE PINE FILM HISTORY PRESENTS

DAN HICKS AND THE HOT LICKS

JUNE 2, 2012 · 6 P.M.-9:30 P.M.
AT LONE RANGER CANYON
IN THE ALABAMA HILLS
TICKETS: $80 PER PERSON

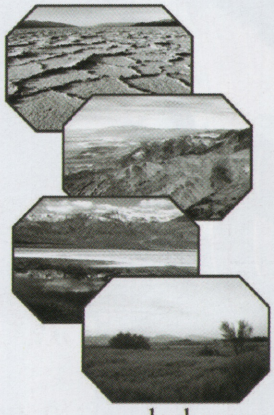


Singer-songwriter Dan Hicks is an American original, one of the defining figures in American roots music. Hicks carves his way through a number of genres, from Tin Pan Alley jazz to western swing and country blues, to create the appealing sound he calls "folk jazz." His lyrics range from the simply sublime to the sublimely ridiculous, all presented with his uniquely skewed and inscrutable touch. Hick's irresistible sense of rhythm, hip lyrical styling, laid-back vocalizing, and infamous on-stage wit turns those who hear him into fans for life.

To purchase tickets, call (760) 876-9909
or visit us online at www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org

Death Valley Natural History Association

The Death Valley Natural History Association is a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the preservation and interpretation of the natural and cultural history of Death Valley area in cooperation with our government partners.



(800) 478-8564

dvnha.org

Advertising Rates

Business Card: H 2" x W 3.5" - $30

1/4 Page: 5"x3.5" - $125

1/2 Page: 5"x7.5" - $250

Full Page: 10"x7.5" - $500

Editor

Anita Marley

Send articles, photos, or ads to:
anitam2449@yahoo.com
16506 Elm Ave., Patterson, CA 95363

(209) 777-6824

TELL YOUR FRIENDS ABOUT THE DEATH VALLEY '49ERS

Membership Application

Each paid membership will include:

- 2 Death Valley '49ers Membership Buttons (which allow access to all Encampment activities)
- 1 Death Valley '49ers Window Decal
- 1 Annual KEEPSAKE publication
- 1 Subscription to the semi-annual news magazine, "Death Valley News"
- 1 Issue of the next Death Valley '49ers Encampment Program

membership packets will be mailed out to you in mid September, in time for the November Encampment.

Membership Application

(please fill out this form, print it out and mail along with your check or money order to the address below)

Name:		
Address:		
City:		
State:		
Zip:		
Email:		
Phone:		

Single: $20.00 per year (sold at Encampment only)	
Regular: $35.00 per year	
Corporate: $300.00 per year	
Life: $500.00 one time	
Educational Programs $	
Donations are welcome $	
Membership amount $	
Package Postage $	2.50
Total Amount Enclosed $	

63RD ANNUAL DEATH VALLEY '49ERS ENCAMPMENT

November 7th-11th, 2012

Please make your check or money order payable to

Death Valley '49ers, Inc, PO Box 101

Amargosa Valley, NV 89020

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN OUTLAW TO MAKE A PERFECT GETAWAY.

The Old West is so alive in Death Valley that your family may feel like a posse taking a much-needed break from the trail to enjoy an inviting oasis. And there's so much to do here – golfing, horseback riding, swimming in our spring-fed pool, visiting our borax museum and exploring this amazing three-million-acre playground, not to mention historical landmarks and natural wonders.

For reservations, call 800-236-7916 or visit furnacecreekresort.com .
For tee times, call 760-786-3373.

FURNACE CREEK RESORT
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK
Operated by Xanterra Parks & Resorts®

WELCOME '49ERS!
Beautiful Places on Earth.®
xanterra.com

66-room Historic Inn (open mid-October to mid-May) • 224-room Ranch Hotel
4 Restaurants • 3 Bars • Gift Shop • World's Lowest Golf Course • Spring-fed Pools
General Store • Horseback Riding (seasonal) • Tennis • Hiking • Borax Museum
Next to National Park Service Visitor Center

Issue No. 91 *Death Valley '49ers Inc.* *Spring 2012*

Death Valley '49er, Inc. PO Box 212, Lone Pine, CA 93545

Non Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
LONE PINE, CA
PERMIT NO. 32

MARY ROPER
PO BOX 458
INDEPENDENCE CA
93526-0458